



**Whitesboro Central School District**  
**Reopening Plan 2020-2021**

Revised: April 12, 2021

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# Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewing: The Spirit of New York's Schools

## Foreword

The mission of the Whitesboro Central School District is “To inspire, cultivate, and empower all learners to maximize their potential.” Our vision - “Together with our community, the Whitesboro Central School District provides a dynamic, comprehensive program committed to relevant, engaging, individualized experiences, while fostering a culture of personal and professional growth in a safe, diverse and positive learning environment.” With our mission and vision at the forefront of the decisions we make, our District’s Safe Reopening of Schools Committee began meeting in mid-June to begin discussions regarding the anticipated requirements and protocols needed to safely reopen our schools. The committee consisted of building principals, district administrators, director of special education, pupil personnel services, technology, transportation, facilities, food service, teachers, including special education and ENL, teacher aides, nurses, counselors, a board of education member and local healthcare provider, and parents. The district also gathered student feedback through our Thought Exchange platform, surveys, and personal conversations. The committee continues to meet to discuss and make recommendations based on the guidance from the New York State Education Department, the New York State Health Department, and the Centers for Disease Control.

The closing of schools in March 2020 has profoundly affected our lives. This impact will continue through the 2020-21 school year and beyond. While no one can predict all the challenges that may arise over the coming weeks and months, it is imperative that we plan for a safe and orderly return to school.

Without question, our highest priority is the health and safety of our entire school community. At the same time, we must also contend with a myriad of complex challenges – mitigating the impacts of months of lost in-person instruction; addressing students’ social and emotional needs in the wake of this catastrophe; ensuring all students have the ability to participate equitably in remote learning; planning for the possibility of deep budget cuts; and so many others.

The Board of Regents and Department’s task was to create a framework to help guide schools and school districts as they continue to plan for school to return in the fall, whether instruction takes place in person, remotely, or through some combination of the two. That framework is presented here, in this guidance document.

The Whitesboro Central School District’s reopening plan includes models for in-person instruction and remote learning. Additionally, parents have the option of providing home instruction (frequently referred to as home schooling) pursuant to New York State Education



Department's Regulation 100.10. It is important to note that these plans can change as new guidance is released. It is also possible that we may need to alternate between our in-person model and fully remote learning throughout the year due to recommendations and guidance from our partnering agencies, and stay-at-home orders from the Governor.

While educating the students of our community is one of our top priorities, the health and safety of our students, staff and families is essential to a successful learning environment. The level of infection, the spread of the virus and response to the disease in our community will be at the forefront of our decision making as we continue to make decisions for our students, staff, and our community.

**Dr. Brian K. Bellair**

Superintendent, Whitesboro Central School District



## Section 1: Communication/Family and Community Engagement

### **1. Plan Development**

District Administrators worked closely with the District Medical Director and with various local and state officials (e.g., local health departments, Oneida County Executive, OHM BOCES, NY State Center for School Health, and the NYSED Office of Facilities Planning) when developing this plan.

### **2. Communication**

The Whitesboro Central School District utilizes the SchoolMessenger application as its primary method of mass communication with families and staff. The application generates a phone call, email, text notification, a notification on the homepage of the district website as well as a push notification through our district's own app. We utilize digital signage in front of our two largest campuses and use traditional media outlets to communicate important information as well.

### **3. Student COVID-19 Training**

Mandatory training/re-training regarding COVID-19 protocols including but not limited to hand and respiratory hygiene, proper usage of face coverings/masks, and physical distancing will be provided to all students. To reinforce this training, signage will be posted throughout the facilities reminding students of proper physical distancing, face covering/mask protocols, and hand and respiratory hygiene.

### **4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The Whitesboro Central School District will utilize daily announcements, electronic communications, and postings throughout district facilities to maintain adherence to CDC and NYS Department of Health guidance regarding the use of acceptable face coverings/masks and eye protection when physical distancing is not possible. The district will provide acceptable face coverings/masks, face shields, and/or eye protection to those students who may have lost or forgotten them as well as staff members and visitors if necessary. Students, staff, and visitors will be encouraged to utilize their own acceptable face coverings/masks/PPE.

### **5. Accessible Communication**

Communications sent out by the Whitesboro Central School District are translated as needed and into languages spoken at home for our families and school community. Written plans will be made accessible to those with visual and/or hearing impairments.



## Section 2: Health and Safety

### 1. *Occupancy Constraints*

Upon review of local, state, and federal guidance with regards to social/physical distancing, the District will allow all students to return to in person instruction. This determination was made after a thorough review of the following factors; (1) *Ability to maintain appropriate social distancing*; (2) *PPE and face covering/mask availability*; (3) *Availability of safe transportation*

### 2. *Communication Plan*

The Whitesboro Central School District utilizes the SchoolMessenger application as its primary method of mass communication with families and staff. The application generates a phone call, email, text notification, a notification on the homepage of the district website as well as a push notification through our district's own app. We utilize digital signage in front of our two largest campuses and use traditional media outlets to communicate important information as well.

### 3. *Illness*

The Whitesboro Central School District worked with our school physician, Dr. Christopher M. Alinea, to develop written protocols that will instruct staff in the observation of signs of illness in students and staff. These protocols include requirements to send students or staff to the school nurse if displaying signs of illness. The District has also worked with the Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES Safety Office to develop tools for staff to use when making decisions regarding COVID-19 exposures and assessments.

### 4. *Temperature Screening*

The Whitesboro Central School District requires staff to complete a daily temperature check and to complete a health screening questionnaire prior to arriving at school. Any staff member who has not done so prior to arrival will be required to immediately complete the temperature check and health screening questionnaire. As recommended by the guidance provided by the New York State Education Department, we strongly encourage parents to screen their child for signs of illness and check their child's temperature daily prior to boarding the school bus or arriving at school. A supply of screening questionnaires will be provided to parents in order to record the results of the daily temperature check. Results of those screenings will be submitted to their classroom teacher upon arrival to school. Students who board their bus and have not been screened will be transported to school and will be seated in assigned seats to maximize the physical distance from other students. Such students will be screened immediately at school and treated in a confidential manner. The same shall apply if a child not utilizing district



transportation arrives at school without a completed screening questionnaire. No student or staff health information will be collected or stored, only the pass/fail results of the screenings.

## **5. *Illness Assessment***

Each school building in the Whitesboro Central School District is staffed with a full-time Registered Nurse, along with a float nurse that is utilized in any building when there is an absence of a nurse. Nurses will assess ill students and staff in accordance with the school physician's standing orders. If warranted, ill students and staff will be sent home along with a recommendation to see their healthcare provider or go to an urgent care facility. In the rare case where a nurse is not present in the building, the building administrator shall consult with another district nurse and/or the school medical director and, if necessary, send the student home with the same recommendation.

## **6. *Isolation***

The district has identified areas in each building that will serve as isolation areas for students who exhibit signs of illness, have a temperature exceeding 100 degrees, and/or have a positive response to the health questionnaire. Students will be supervised by staff until the student is picked up.

- Parents will be notified that acutely ill students, especially with signs of lower respiratory infection (cough and/or difficulty breathing), fever and possible Coronavirus exposure should not be sent to school. The student should be evaluated by their healthcare provider to determine if a COVID-19 test needs to be administered.
- Face covering/mask use, physical distancing and personal hygiene protocols will be in place and followed at all times.
- If a student develops symptoms while in school, he/she should immediately be removed from the classroom and referred to the nurse's office for isolation using the safest and, most direct route. cursory exams will be performed to assure the student is not in any immediate danger.
- Parents will be notified for immediate pickup and transport for medical care. Students will exit the building via the safest and most direct route.
- Documentation of all potential close contacts and locations the student visited that day will be recorded for future use if the student tests positive.
- The isolation and all areas of potential exposure will be disinfected per environmental and school protocol.



## **7. Visitors**

All visitors must receive prior approval from the building administrator including parents, guests, contractors and vendors. Phone calls, e-mail, mail, or video conferences should be used whenever possible, even if this means turning someone away at the door. Visitors deemed essential must complete the health questionnaire and submit to a temperature check prior to being admitted. A visitor that presents signs of illness, has a temperature exceeding 100 degrees, and/or a positive response to the health questionnaire will not be admitted and will be directed to leave school grounds immediately. If admitted, visitors must follow the physical distancing mandate and follow the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) guidelines for the use of acceptable face coverings/masks. Face coverings, and hand sanitizer will be available at all main entrances for visitors as needed. Once the purpose of the visit has concluded, the visitor must sign out and leave school grounds immediately.

## **8. Parent/Guardian Illness Observation**

The District will ensure the written protocol is available on our website and provided in hard copy to parents/guardians upon request. This protocol will be developed in collaboration with our school physician, Dr. Alinea.

## **9. Hand and Respiratory Hygiene**

Mandatory training/re-training regarding COVID-19 hand and respiratory hygiene protocols will be provided to all students and staff. To reinforce this training, signage will be posted throughout the facilities reminding students and staff of proper hand and respiratory hygiene.

## **10. Social/Physical Distancing**

Mandatory training/re-training regarding COVID-19 protocols including maintaining social/physical distance will be provided to all students and staff. To reinforce this training, signage will be posted throughout the facilities reminding all persons of proper physical distancing.

## **11. High Risk Accommodation**

The District will identify the need for student/staff accommodations and will be provided on a case-by-case basis in accordance with state and federal law.



## **12. Face Coverings**

As recommended by the CDC, the universal and correct use of properly fitting face coverings/masks are required in classrooms, hallways, restrooms, offices, other common areas, including buses and whenever social distancing cannot be maintained. A two or three layered mask is recommended. Masks that do not fit properly, are one-layered, contain an exhalation valve, are made from loosely woven or knitted fabric, or from material that is hard to breathe through are not recommended. To reinforce this protocol, signage will be posted throughout the facilities reminding all persons of these protocols. Although not required, face shields are available for students and staff upon request. A copy of the written protocol will be provided to all staff and parents.

## **13. PPE Inventory and Procurement**

Using the guidance provided by New York State Education Department (NYSED), we are working through our Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES and local vendors to ensure adequate supplies are obtained and available for use by students, staff, and visitors. The additional PPE for those who require it including school nurses, such as N95 and/or KN95 masks, disposable gowns, eye protection, face shields and nitrile gloves has been and will continue to be acquired in the quantities recommended in the NYSED guidance document.

## **14. Confirmed COVID-19 Response**

If there is a confirmed lab-tested case of COVID-19 in the school, our written protocol will follow the CDC and NYS Department of Health recommendations by closing off all areas known to have been used by the individual, waiting 24 hours if possible, then cleaning and disinfecting those areas, while opening outside windows and doors to increase air circulation. The District will assist with the NYS Department of Health's contact tracing process. To facilitate their efforts, we will maintain accurate attendance records of students and staff members, ensure student schedules are current, and maintain accurate visitor logs with contact information.

## **15. Return to School**

Our protocol for a return to school for students and staff follows the New York State Department of Health's Pre-K to Grade 12 COVID-19 Toolkit and is coordinated with the Oneida County or Herkimer County Health Departments. A link to the toolkit can be found at <https://www.wboro.org/reopeningplan> under the "Links" section.

The District will coordinate with the Oneida County or Herkimer County Health Departments regarding the return to school for those quarantined due to contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. A negative COVID-19 diagnostic test result administered after and including the 7th to 10th day of the 10 day quarantine period is strongly recommended prior to returning to



school. Individuals must continue daily symptom monitoring through the 14<sup>th</sup> day after the exposure. Questions regarding testing should be directed to the appropriate school nurse.

### **16. Disinfection**

The Whitesboro Central School District has developed and implemented an in-depth written plan for the cleaning and disinfection of each school building. The written protocols are based on the guidance and recommendations provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### **17. Safety Drills**

The Whitesboro Central School District will ensure that all required school safety drills are completed in accordance with state guidelines. Within the first week of all students returning to school, all students and staff will receive appropriate training as it relates to responding to school safety drills. School safety drills will be completed with utmost care given to the safety of all building occupants. Social/physical distancing practices will be monitored and enforced during all school safety drills.

### **18. COVID-19 Safety Coordinator**

The Whitesboro Central School District maintains a multi-tier school reopening compliance protocol. Each individual building principal will be responsible to implement and continually monitor the reopening plan, as well as any phased-in reopening activities necessary to allow for operational issues to be resolved before activities return to normal or “new normal” levels. The Assistant Superintendent for Business will oversee the Districts’ compliance with the reopening plan and will provide any needed support and direction to the building principals.



## Section 3: Facilities

### **1. Fire, Building, and Energy Conservation Codes**

The Whitesboro Central School District reopening plan complies with all requirements of the 2020 New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, the State Energy Conservation Code, and any changes are submitted to the New York State Education Department, Office of Facilities Planning (OFP).

### **2. Hand Sanitizer Dispensers**

The Whitesboro Central School District has procured and installed Alcohol-based Hand-Rub Dispensers in key locations, as identified and directed in the FCNYS 2020 Section 5705.5.

### **3. Dividers**

Any/all use of dividers in classrooms, libraries, cafeterias, auditoriums, gymnasiums, and other points of congregation will be in compliance with all local and state guidelines.

### **4. Leasing of Facilities**

At this time, the Whitesboro Central School District is not pursuing leasing new or existing facilities; however, any future plans for facility leases will be done in consultation with the NY State Education Department, Office of Facilities Planning (OFP) for preliminary evaluation prior to any final action being taken.

### **5. Tents**

At this time, the Whitesboro Central School District does not intend to use temporary or permanent tents for primary instruction. In the event that these tents are deemed necessary, the District will adhere to the BCNYS.

### **6. Toilets and Sinks**

The Whitesboro Central School District works closely with our design professionals and the NY State Education Department, Office of Facilities Planning (OFP) to insure that the existing number of toilets and sinks meet the minimum standards of the BCNYS.



## 7. *Drinking Fountains*

The Whitesboro Central School District reopening plan ensures that each building provides adequate access to potable drinking water. Traditional drinking fountains will be closed while bottle refilling stations will remain operational. Alternate sources for drinking water will be provided.

## 8. *Ventilation*

The Whitesboro Central School District reopening plan provides written plans on how to maintain adequate, code required ventilation (natural or mechanical). The Whitesboro Central School District will continue to work with our design professionals to utilize the most efficient and effective filters for our ventilation system.

## 9. *Plastic Separators/Dividers*

The Whitesboro Central School District reopening plan does comply with the 2020 BCNYS Section 2606. The District will not be using lexan/polycarbonate separators. In the event that this type of divider is required, the District will adhere to any and all regulations for their use.

## Section 4: Child Nutrition

### 1. *Meals*

All students enrolled in the SFA will receive access to FREE meals while in attendance and remote learning as follows:

#### **In-person learning meals (K-12):**

**Breakfast K-12-** Upon arrival, students will proceed through the serving line where they will receive their grab and go breakfast option they select and proceed to their homeroom or designated eating location for consumption.

**Lunch- K-5-** Students will fill out a meal form/slip indicating their lunch selection for each day with their homeroom teacher. The lunch forms/slips are then collected and submitted to the food service kitchen to begin preparation. For each allotted lunch period, students will proceed through the serving line, pick up their selected grab and go menu option for the day and proceed to their designated eating location for consumption.



**Lunch-6-12-** Students will proceed through the serving line, choose one of the offered grab and go options for the day and proceed to their designated eating location for consumption.

**100% remote learning meals (K-12):**

Remote meals will ONLY be provided to students who have opted for the 100% remote learning model. Also, any student who is required to stay home and participate in remote learning due to quarantine/isolation protocols related to COVID-19 exposure will have the option of receiving remote meals during this duration of time.

Remote meals will be delivered to students two days/week (Monday/Wednesday-unless school is closed on that particular day then delivery would take place that next operating school day). The meals delivered on Monday will include: Monday's lunch meal, Tuesday's breakfast and lunch meal and Wednesday's breakfast meal. Wednesday's delivery of meals will include: Wednesday's lunch meal, Thursday's breakfast and lunch meal, Friday's breakfast and lunch meal and Monday's breakfast meal. These meals will be delivered by the Whitesboro CSD transportation department. To learn more about the remote meal menu options, you can find the monthly remote menus on the district's website at [www.wboro.org](http://www.wboro.org).

**2. Health and Safety Guidelines**

Food service staff will follow all policies, procedures and protocols established by the District, local Health Department, NYSED and CDC. Training for all health and safety guidelines will be provided to staff prior to the start of school and periodically throughout the school year. Prior to employees beginning work, a health self-assessment will be completed either prior to or immediately upon arriving to work. If an employee is experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, they will be instructed to either remain at or go home immediately and notify the Director of Food Service.

Food service staff will work in their designated location/station and maintain at least 3 feet social distancing in order to comply with CDC spacing guidelines. Food service staff will be required to wear a facemask during work hours along with other PPE such as latex gloves and face shields (face shields will not be required, but available on an individual basis).

During meal service, food service staff will stand behind clear, protective shields that will separate staff and students from having direct contact. Money transactions will occur on an as-needed basis during which staff will wear gloves. Money will be transferred by students/staff under the protective shield in an open space. Students will give their 4-digit pin or name verbally in place of inputting directly into a digital pin pad.



Between meal periods, food service staff will clean and sanitize serving lines and cashier areas on a continuous basis.

Students will enter and exit serving lines of each cafeteria as cohorts, wearing a face covering/mask at all times until they are seated at their designated meal consumption location.

### **3. Food Allergies**

*Each school and/or district reopening plan includes measures to protect students with food allergies if providing meals in spaces outside the cafeteria.*

The building nurses, teachers and food service staff will communicate and identify the students with food allergies throughout the District. In classroom settings where a student(s) is identified with a food allergy, the food service program will provide food substitutes/alternatives for the students who are participating in the meal program. As needed, classrooms will be designated as “peanut-free” which prohibits any foods with allergen ingredients into this setting. District staff will be educated and informed regarding the District’s Food Allergy Program.

### **4. Hand Hygiene and Discouraging Sharing of Food and Beverages**

*Each school and/or district reopening plan must include protocols and procedures for how students will perform hand hygiene before and after eating, how appropriate hand hygiene will be promoted, and how sharing of food and beverages will be discouraged.*

Protocols and procedures for how students will perform hand hygiene before and after eating, the promotion of appropriate hand hygiene, and not allowing sharing of food and beverages as follows:

- On the first day of school and periodically thereafter, students will learn and practice proper hand washing techniques.
- Signs will be displayed inside and outside the cafeterias as reminders to reinforce the importance of good hand hygiene.
- Students will be reminded of the importance of not sharing food and/or beverages and will be monitored by staff for compliance.

### **5. Cleaning and Disinfection**

Food service staff, custodial and cafeteria aides will be assigned specific tasks to ensure the proper cleaning and sanitizing of cafeteria tables and other areas of use during meal periods.



## **6. *Child Nutrition Program Compliance***

The Director of Food Service will be the designated liaison to the District in regards to the Child Nutrition Program requirements. If/when changes, revisions, etc. are warranted, the Director of Food Service will communicate the necessary information to the appropriate District Administrators.

## **7. *Communication***

The District will utilize the District website, mass notification system and District mobile app to communicate with families.

## **8. *Social Distancing***

The District's reopening plan will require the following for compliance with social distancing while students consume their meals:

Students will maintain appropriate social/physical distancing (6 feet) while sitting at the cafeteria tables/desks and/or other designated areas assigned for meal consumption.

## **Section 5: Transportation**

### **1. *Cleaning and Disinfection***

Whitesboro Central School District bus drivers will clean and disinfect buses at the end of each day, by sanitizing the interior of the bus with an all-purpose disinfectant.

### **2. *High Contact Spot Disinfection***

Whitesboro Central School District bus drivers and/or attendants will disinfect high contact touch points at the completion of each route.

### **3. *Hand Sanitizer***

Whitesboro Central School District buses will not be equipped with hand sanitizer.

### **4. *Hand Sanitizer - Personal Use***

Whitesboro Central School District bus drivers, monitors and attendants will be instructed that personal bottles of hand sanitizer not exceeding 8 ounces in volume are permitted for personal use and must be secured when not in use..



## **5. Face Coverings**

Whitesboro Central School District bus drivers, monitors, attendants, and cleaners have been instructed to wear a face covering/mask, as well as, enforce good social distancing practices.

## **6. COVID-19 PPE and Symptoms Training**

Whitesboro Central School District will train transportation staff (drivers, monitors, attendants, and mechanics ) and will provide periodic training on the proper use of personal protective equipment and on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

## **7. Social/Physical Distancing Training**

Whitesboro Central School District will train transportation staff (drivers, monitors, attendants, and mechanics) and provide periodic training on the proper use of social distancing.

## **8. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Whitesboro Central School District currently provides and will continue to provide Personal Protective Equipment such as face coverings/masks, eye protection (if needed/required/requested) and gloves for drivers, monitors, and attendants.

## **9. Hand Sanitizer in Transportation Locations**

Whitesboro Central School District ensures that hand sanitizer is provided and will continue to be provided for staff use in the dispatch office, employee break room and in the bus garage.

## **10. Use of Gloves**

Whitesboro Central School District will require that drivers, monitors and attendants who have direct physical contact with a child must wear gloves.

## **11. Self-Health Assessment**

Whitesboro Central School District currently requires and will continue to require that school bus drivers, monitors, attendants and mechanics perform a self-assessment for symptoms of COVID-19 daily before arriving to work. In addition, if they do have a symptom of COVID-19, they must report that to their supervisor immediately.

## **12. Face Coverings/Masks and Face Shields**

Whitesboro Central School District will require students to wear a mask at all times while on the bus. Face shield use will be required while on the school bus if students are not able to sit one



student per seat. Family members from the same household are able and encouraged to sit together (same seat) on the bus.

### ***13. No Denial of Transportation***

Whitesboro Central School District will ensure that students who do not have a mask and/or face shield will NOT be denied transportation. Masks and face shields will be available on each bus for students who arrive without either/both. Those students will still need to adhere to the social/physical distancing guidelines.

### ***14. Providing of Face Coverings/Masks and Face Shields***

Whitesboro Central School District will ensure that students who do not have a face covering/mask or face shield will be provided one when required by the District.

### ***15. Students with Disabilities Impacting Face Covering Use***

Whitesboro Central School District will ensure that students with a disability, which prevents them from wearing a face covering/mask or face shield, will not be forced to wear a mask and/or face shield or denied transportation due to not wearing a face mask or face shield.

### ***16. Student COVID-19 Training***

Whitesboro Central School District will ensure that students are trained/re-trained and provided periodic reminders on the proper use of personal protective equipment and signs and symptoms of COVID-19 while on the school bus.

### ***17. Student Social Distancing Training***

Whitesboro Central School District will ensure that students are trained/re-trained and provided periodic reminders on the proper use of social/physical distancing while on the school bus.

### ***18. Student Transportation for Out of District Placements***

Whitesboro Central School District will ensure that if school is in session remotely or otherwise, pupil transportation will be provided to nonpublic, parochial, private, charter schools or students whose Individualized Education Program have placed them out of District whose schools are meeting and conducting in-person session education when/if the District is not.



## Section 6: Social Emotional Well-Being

### 1. *Counseling Plan*

The Whitesboro Central School District has developed a comprehensive K-12 Counseling Plan that serves the needs of over 3,100 students and all staff members across our seven buildings. A team of certified School Counselors, have recently updated our K-12 Counseling Plan to reflect the Commissioner's Regulations (revised July 1, 2019) This plan is continually reviewed and is subject to revision and updates to reflect current and future needs. The plan is posted on the District website at <https://www.wboro.org/Page/10145>.

### 2. *Counseling Advisory*

The Whitesboro Central School District has formed a Counseling Advisory Council (CAC) consisting of the requisite stakeholders including parents, members of the board of education, school building and/or District leaders, community-based service providers, teachers, certified school counselors and other pupil personnel service providers in the District including school social workers and/or school psychologists. The purpose of the CAC is to review the comprehensive developmental school counseling plan, as well as to advise and support the implementation of the counseling program.

### 3. *Mental Health, Behavioral and Emotional Support*

The Whitesboro Central School District Pupil Personnel Department is implementing a Multi-Tier Systems of Supports (MTSS) framework that will guide our delivery of services to all students. We will employ a three-tiered approach:

- Tier 1 – Deliver Social Emotional Learning instruction and evidence-based practices in the classroom targeted to all students
- Tier 2 – School Counselors and/or Social Workers provide small-group or individual supports for students identified as at-risk with moderate mental health, behavioral, and/or emotional needs
- Tier 3 – Students suffering from significant mental health, behavioral and emotional challenges may require individualized clinical interventions, counseling, and/or a referral to local community resources

Age-appropriate screening tools will serve as a gauge for the counseling staff to inform the management of additional interventions, supports, or programs necessary to ameliorate student mental health, behavioral and emotional issues. Additional tools and resources will be provided to classroom teachers that will help them identify the aforementioned areas of concern they may



have with a specific student or students that may result in a referral to a member of the counseling staff or appropriate building level Student Support Team (SST).

For students who are fully remote and in cases where the District or school needs to implement a fully remote model, our counselors, social workers and psychologists will continue to provide services to our students.

#### **4. Professional Development and Supports for Staff**

Faculty and staff will be provided professional development opportunities through our District Teacher Center and the BOCES Safety Office utilizing webinars, video conferences, and in-person presentations (when allowed). Training will be provided by professionals with a counseling and/or other appropriate background. Presentations by our counseling staff during building-level staff meetings will be utilized as well.

## Section 7: School Schedules

### **1. School Schedule**

Beginning on April 12, 2021, all students in grades K-12 will be allowed to resume daily in-person learning. In compliance with the Oneida County Health Department and the New York State Education Department regulations and guidance, the District will resume daily in-person learning for all K-12 students while adhering to safety and social distancing guidelines. On-campus instruction will include instruction for all content areas: Math, ELA, Science, and Social Studies as well as specials: PE, art, music, and library.

**Full (100%) Remote Students:** For K-5 students not wanting to return to in-person instruction, our remote learning program will continue to be taught and facilitated by certified teachers from the Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES and their Instructional Technology Division. This is a full day program and will consist of a combination of live instruction (synchronous), pre-recorded lessons, and work provided via an online learning platform (asynchronous). All students will have frequent, substantive interactions with their NYS certified teacher.

**Full (100%) Remote Students:** For students in grades 6-12, our remote program will be taught and facilitated by certified staff members from the Whitesboro Central School District. Our secondary programs will be full-day programs and will consist of remotely delivered live instruction.



## Section 8: Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism

### 1. Attendance Tracking

#### Attendance

Attendance records will be maintained for all students on a daily basis whether in the classroom or connected remotely from home. Student attendance will also be guided by the Whitesboro Central School District's Attendance Policy #7006. The following will take place daily:

- Every teacher will record attendance daily on our Student Management System whether instruction is delivered in school or remotely.
- Each parent/guardian will receive a phone call if their child is marked absent that day.
- Building principals will analyze attendance weekly and implement a tiered approach to avoid potential chronic absenteeism.

#### Chronic Absenteeism

Extensive research indicates that missing ten percent of school days tends to be the “tipping point” when student achievement declines. Chronic absence, or absenteeism, is defined as missing at least ten percent of enrolled school days, which in New York State is eighteen days per school year, or two days per month. Chronic absence includes all absences from instruction, both excused and unexcused. It is essential for school attendance policies to focus on the academic consequences of lost instructional time and for the school procedures to address absences before students fall behind in school. During these challenging times, the development of positive school relationships may be a lifeline for students disconnected from school. Although flexibility is recommended when monitoring attendance in a remote instructional model, for students who have not engaged in remote learning and school staff outreach to parents/guardians has been unsuccessful, the Whitesboro Central School District will utilize a variety of methods of reaching out to families including the following:

- Phone calls to families are often the simplest solution and provide an immediate opportunity to offer resources and assess student and family needs.
- Where families do not respond to phone calls, texting may offer a lower-stress alternative and a subsequent phone call can be arranged.
- Enlisting the support of adults in the school who have established a connection with the student and/or family may yield improved results. Counselors, coaches, social workers, and psychologists are often logical choices, in addition to teaching staff. Social media contact or using friends to reach out can also be effective strategies.
- The School Based Intervention Team will meet virtually and work collaboratively with parents to address and create a plan to address improving student chronic absenteeism.
- Attendance letters will be sent on a quarterly basis to families.



- Students not in compliance with the Whitesboro Central School District's Attendance Policy #7006 will be referred to the Initial Response Team (IRT) at the secondary level.

### **Reference URLs:**

Board of Education Policy 7006

<http://web2.moboces.org/policies/whitesboro/7006%20student%20attendance%20policy.pdf>

## Section 9: Technology and Connectivity

### **1. Identification of Access Barriers to Technology**

To best support full-remote and hybrid (in-person and remote) learning, high-speed internet access and computing devices for each student and staff member's exclusive use are critical. As was conducted prior to the COVID-19 closure at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, Whitesboro Central School District has conducted a survey of all parents/guardians which included specific questions regarding internet and device access for students. The results of the survey facilitate the identification of all cases in which students do not have high-speed internet access and/or exclusive access to a computing device. The survey was made available online, on paper, and was translated as needed. The results were compiled in a detailed spreadsheet, allowing for the identification of those parents/guardians who did not respond, such that building-level administrators can reach out to them directly to inquire about these critical needs.

### **2. Addressing Access Barriers to Technology**

As the culmination of several years of strategic, planned procurements, the Whitesboro Central School District will implement a 1:1 device program for students for the 2020-2021 school year. This ensures not only that those students in need of a device are provided with one, but also ensures that all students have the ability to use the same assigned device both in and out of school. One-to-one programs help maintain a consistent experience for students, allow staff to be confident in the device capabilities of their students, and eliminate the need to share devices - thereby significantly reducing the need for disinfection procedures that shared devices entail.

As was the case in response to the COVID-19 closure at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, gaps in student high-speed internet access at their place(s) of residence will continue to be addressed through the use of District-assigned 4G LTE Wi-Fi hotspots. These devices are configured to route all traffic through Whitesboro Central School District's established internet filtering infrastructure, as well as to limit connections to only those devices provided by the District; connection of personally owned devices is disabled.



Staff high-speed internet access at their place(s) of residence is pervasive; any unique outliers are addressed through the use of District-assigned 4G LTE Wi-Fi hotspots. All staff are assigned District-provided PC 2-in-1s (laptop/tablet) or laptops for their computing device needs.

### 3. *Participation in Learning and Demonstration of Mastery*

*Each school and/or district reopening plan must include information on how the school or district will provide multiple ways for students to participate in learning and demonstrate mastery of Learning Standards in remote or blended models, especially if all students do not yet have sufficient access to devices and/or high-speed internet.*

The Whitesboro Central School District will implement a 1:1 device program for students for the 2020-2021 school year, and will ensure all students have high-speed internet access through the use of District-assigned 4G LTE Wi-Fi hotspots. This will ensure that all students are able to participate in learning and demonstrate mastery of Learning Standards in hybrid (in-person and remote) and/or full-remote learning models. If unique cases are to arise in which students are not able to be provided District-assigned devices and/or 4G LTE Wi-Fi hotspots due to parent/guardian refusal of devices and/or other circumstances beyond the District’s control, participation in learning and demonstration of mastery of Learning Standards will be facilitated through dial-in and/or paper learning materials and/or assessments.

## Section 10: Teaching and Learning

### 1. *Continuity of Learning Plan*

The Whitesboro Central School District reopening plan includes a continuity of learning plan for the 2020-2021 school year. The plan prepares the District for in-person and remote models of instruction.

<b>IN-PERSON</b>	All students are allowed to physically return to school on April 12, 2021 following health and safety guidelines. This determination is made due to successful virus containment and minimal or low levels of COVID-19 transmission.
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<b>REMOTE LEARNING</b>	<p>For K-5 students not wanting to return to in-person instruction, our remote learning program will continue to be taught and facilitated by certified teachers from the Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES and their Instructional Technology Division. This is a full day program and will consist of a combination of live instruction (synchronous), pre recorded lessons, and work provided via an online learning platform (asynchronous). All students will have frequent, substantive interactions with their NYS certified teacher.</p> <p>For students in grades 6-12, our remote program will be taught and facilitated by certified staff members from the Whitesboro Central School District. Our secondary programs will be full day programs and will consist of remotely delivered live instruction.</p>
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**2. Educational Program**

The Whitesboro Central School District will provide instruction aligned to the New York State Learning Standards. Instruction will be guided by current curricular materials and units that are aligned with NYS Standards. Teachers will follow District curriculum maps, calendars, and pacing guides that ensure pacing to meet grade level standards.

**3. Interaction Between Teachers and Students**

The Whitesboro Central School District will be providing substantive interaction between teachers and students. Teachers will interact directly with students daily in several ways. Teachers will use video conferencing to have live contact with students, as well as using Google Classroom, Zoom and other applications to monitor student work, check for understanding, and verify the completion of assignments.

**4. Equity of Instruction**

The District and our IT Department will monitor each student’s ability to connect to the internet. The District will provide devices and internet access to any family who needs it. Students who receive support services will continue to receive those services. Services will be provided in school, if students are in school, as well as remotely.



## 5. Communication

Methods for contacting schools and teachers will be communicated in several ways:

- District website
- District and school newsletters (printed and mailed to each home)
- Teachers' Google Classrooms
- School voicemail system which is accessible to teachers and administrators remotely
- School email

## 6. Pre-K

*Districts that contract with eligible agencies, including CBOs, to provide Prekindergarten programs must attest that they have measures in place to ensure eligible agencies with whom they contract will follow health and safety guidelines outlined in NYSED guidance and required by the New York State Department of Health. The district must also ensure their eligible agencies have a Continuity of Learning plan that addresses in-person, remote, and hybrid models of instruction.*

The Whitesboro Central School District does not currently have a Prekindergarten program.

## Section 11: Special Education

### 1. Free Appropriate Public Education for Students with Disabilities

The District will provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those providing special education and services. Parents will choose their preferred mode of instruction and services, based on the District's reopening plan, and will be provided special education instruction and services either by in-person or remote learning. Special education teachers and related service providers will collaborate with parents to provide services to the greatest extent possible, consistent with individualized education programs (IEPs), and will document this collaboration and the recommended services.

### 2. Documentation of Programs and Services Offered

Programs and services offered and provided to students with disabilities as well as communications with parents will be documented. All service providers will contact parents to discuss the provision of services to his/her child based on the parent's selected mode of instruction or services. Teachers and/or related service providers will document communication



with parents. Progress reports will continue to be provided quarterly to document progress toward IEP goals.

### **3. *Parent Engagement***

Special education teachers and related service providers will collaborate with parents regarding the provision of special education instruction and supports, as well as modifications and accommodations, and how they may be adjusted based on the parent's preferred mode of instruction. All communication will be provided in the parent's preferred language or mode of communication.

### **4. *CPSE and CSE Collaboration***

The committee on preschool special education (CPSE) and committee on special education (CSE) will collaborate with out-of-district program providers to ensure there is an understanding of the provision of services consistent with the recommendations on IEPs, plans for monitoring and communicating student progress, and commitment to sharing resources. Out-of-district providers will collaborate with parents to provide services to the greatest extent possible, consistent with IEPs, and will document this collaboration and the recommended services. Providers will share this documentation with the CSE and CPSE. Providers will also monitor and communicate student progress to parents and the CPSE and CSE via IEP progress notes and committee meetings. The District will collaborate with outside programs to ensure students have access to adequate resources to participate in services.

### **5. *Accommodations and Modifications***

Students will be provided with the necessary accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids and services, and technology (including assistive technology) to meet the unique disability-related needs of students. All service providers will communicate with parents to ensure students have access to the necessary supports recommended in his/her child's IEP.



## Section 12: Bilingual Education and World Languages

### 1. *English Language Learner (ELL) Identification*

The District will complete the English Language Learner (ELL) identification process within 30 days of the start of the school year for all students who enrolled during the COVID-19 school closure, as well as all students who enroll during summer 2020 and during the first 20 school days of the 2020-21 school year. After this 20 day flexibility period, identification of ELLs will resume for all students within 10 school days as required by NYSED Commissioner's Regulations Part 154.

### 2. *Required Units of Study*

All ELLs will receive the required instructional units of study based on their most recently measured English language proficiency level. Communication

Service providers of ELLs will collaborate with parents to discuss their child's education and English as a New Language (ENL) services in their preferred language and mode of communication. Service providers will document all communication including the language and mode of communication used. The District will continue to utilize translating services, as needed, to ensure parents are able to communicate with staff.

## Section 13: Teacher and Principal Evaluation System

### 1. *Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR)*

The Whitesboro Central School District will continue to ensure all teachers and principals are evaluated pursuant to the District's NYSED-approved APPR plan.

#### **Reference URLs:**

APPR Plan

<http://www.wboro.org/appr>



## Section 14: Certification, Incidental Teaching, and Substitute Teaching

### 1. Certification

All teachers in the Whitesboro Central School District will hold valid and appropriate certifications for the courses and grades they are assigned to teach. The District will also follow District Policy 6100, Certification and Incidental Teaching, which states that all employees filling positions for which certification is required shall meet certification requirements of the Commissioner of Education as implemented through the New York State Education Department Office of Teaching Initiatives. Substitute teachers may be an important resource for schools during the COVID-19 crisis, as such, the Whitesboro Central School District will follow the Board of Education Policy 6104 Substitute Teaching, which adheres to Education Law Subsections 3004 and the NYSED Commissioner's Regulations 80-5.3. The SIRS-328 Staff Out of Certification Report and the SIRS-329 Staff Certification Report will be used to monitor staff certifications that are set to expire and also monitor our teachers' credentials and appropriate certifications for their teaching assignments. Using our existing databases and available reports, teachers will be notified in writing if they have an expiring certification well in advance of their expiring certification.

#### **Reference URLs:**

Board of Education Policy 6100

<http://web2.moboces.org/policies/whitesboro/6100%20certification%20and%20incidental%20teaching.pdf>

Board of Education Policy 6104

<http://web2.moboces.org/policies/whitesboro/6104%20substitute%20teachers.pdf>

